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VIII. AIR TRANSPORTATION

•509 When the Nationalist withdrew to Formosa in 1949, the principal aircraft companies, the China National Aviation Corporation and the Central Aviation Transport Corporation, left few planes on the China Mainland. But in November 1949, following the defection of Liu Ching-i and Chen Cho-lin, who controlled the companies, over a dozen passenger planes were flown back to the Mainland from Hong Kong.[30]

During the first years of the Communist regime, there were few planes available for commercial transportation in China. Since 1954, Soviet Russia and local manufacturers have attempted to satisfy the most urgently required needs of the Party and government.[31] Although the Communists assert that airplanes are now produced in China, reports from Hong Kong indicate that Chinese companies are merely assembling parts imported from Soviet Russia.[32]

Four civil air routes serving Peking were in operation in 1955 : the Peking-Hankow-

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30. Far Eastern Economic Review, Hong Kong, Dec. 1, 1949, Vol. VII, No. 22, p. 165.
31. People's Daily, Peking, Sept. 29, 1954.
32. (continued next page)

1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF12 North China
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509 Chungking line, the Peking-Mukden-Harbin-Chita line, and the Peking-Lanchou-Tihua Line.[33] International air routes, which are in process of organization, include the China-Burma, the China-India, and the China-Vietminh lines. When they will be opened has not yet been announced. Communist China claims that its civil-aviation goals for the first half of 1955 have been overfulfilled. The number of passengers carried was 13 per cent above the goal set, and the amount of freight carried was 5.9 per cent above that of the same period in 1954. In the same period, the amount of mail carried increased by 76 per cent.[34]

IX. TRANSPORTATION OF KEY COMMODITIES

A. Grains

433 489 Before World War II, North China was a grain-deficient region, forced to depend upon a supply of millet, corn, and kaoliang from Manchuria and upon the import of wheat flour

32. China Weekly, Hong Kong, Jan. 10, 1955, p. 23.

33. Ibid.

34. New China News Agency release, Peking, July 30, 1955.